Our SUPER Summer Issue! ★ Inside: A Giant Color-In Poster

July/August 2013

American Girl®

Celebrating 20 years of fun!

americangirlmagazine.com

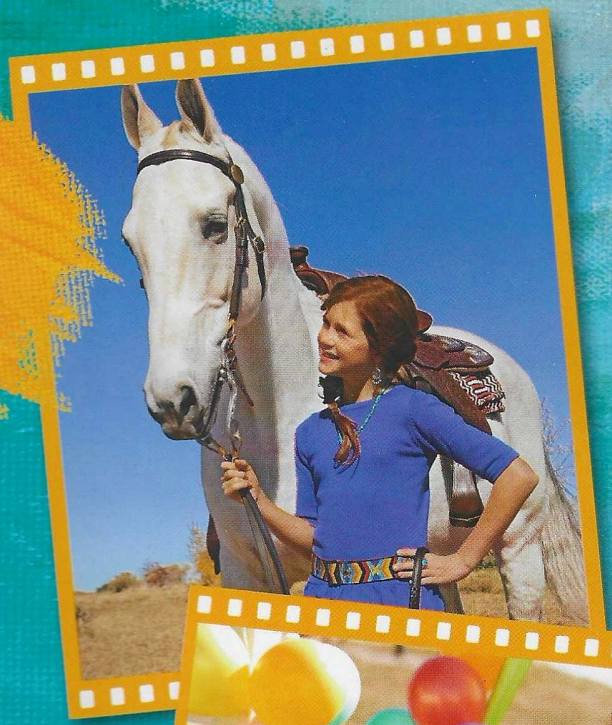
13 tips for packing a suitcase

* Throw a picnic **party**
* Make art you can **wear**

Plus!
Read our brand-new comic

ADVERTISEMENT

Saige Paints the Sky



Watch Saige's all-new movie on TV and DVD!

This movie features the stories of Saige Copeland, our 2013 Girl of the Year®! Saige loves riding horses and painting on her Grandma Mimi's ranch in New Mexico. So when fourth grade begins and her school can't offer art classes, she feels frustrated. Can Saige find a creative way to make a difference?

Saturday, July 13th at 8/7c on NBC

Coming soon to Blu-ray™ Combo Pack and DVD

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Learn more about Saige and her new movie at **americangirl.com/girloftheyear.**

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Cover Credits: Wardrobe styling: Janie Goldstein. Hair: Cindy Stutzel.

American Girl® (ISSN 1062-7812, Canadian Sales Agreement Number 40635507) is published bimonthly by American Girl Publishing, 8400 Fairway Place, Middleton WI 53562. Copyright © 2013 American Girl. All rights reserved. Subscription rates: One year (six issues) $24.95. Non-U.S. subscriptions $29 U.S. Funds. Single issues (current or back copies) $4.95. Prices subject to change. Periodical postage paid at Madison, Wisconsin, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to: American Girl, PO Box 5535, Harlan IA 51593-1035.

Customer Service: 800-234-1278. Subscriber: Send change of address information six weeks before moving to American Girl, PO Box 5535, Harlan IA 51593-1035. Send old address label (recent mailing label is best), new address, and new telephone number, or call 800-234-1278. Occasionally, American Girl makes its list of adult and family names available to other reputable companies for their offering of products and services. We make every effort to ensure that girls' names are not included on this list. If you prefer not to receive such mail, please call our customer service department at 800-234-1278 or write to us at 8400 Fairway Place, Middleton WI 53562.
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American Girl is published by
American Girl Publishing
8400 Fairway Place
Middleton WI 53562
E-mail address: readermail@americangirl.com
americangirlmagazine.com

Recommended by Parents' Choice, 2013

The National Magazine Awards Finalist

American Girl®

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10% post-consumer waste

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Hawaii?
Paris?!
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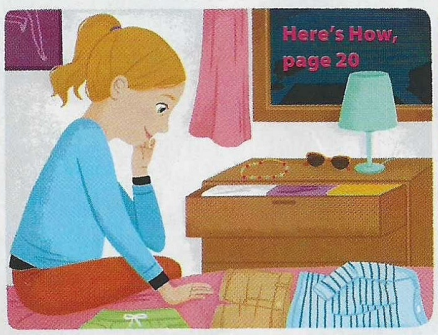

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Plus AG's Seaside Summer Fun Poster

Cover photo: Steven Talley

Safety first!

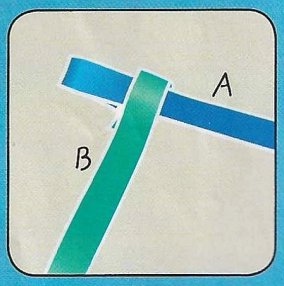
Some of our projects and activities require an adult's help.

When you see this symbol, be sure to ask an adult to work with you.

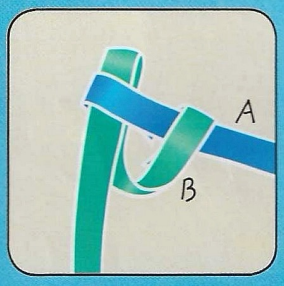
Girls EXPRESS

Flip-Flop Flair

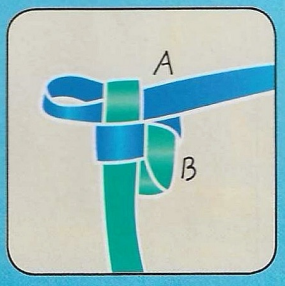
Refresh plain sandals with a quick and easy ribbon braid.



1. Start with 2 ribbons (⅜-inch wide and 2 feet long). Make a small loop on one end of each ribbon and glue to hold. Let dry. Push ribbon A's loop through ribbon B's.



2. Fold ribbon B and push the fold through ribbon A's loop. That will make a new loop. Then fold ribbon A and push the fold through ribbon B's loop.



3. Weave until the braid is as long as a sandal strap. Fold remaining ribbon under the braid and glue in place. Trim excess. Make a braid for each strap, and attach with craft glue or double-stick tape.

Meet an AG Reader

Isabella C.

Age 9, Virginia

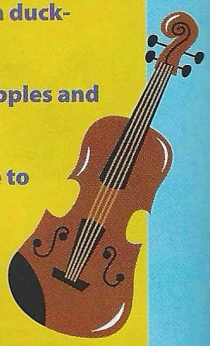
I live with my mom and dad, my sister (Hannah), and my dog (Sadie.)

In 20 years, I'll be performing on Broadway.

My favorite funny word or phrase: Shut the front door!

My proudest day was when I was cast in my first professional play. I played a duckling in *Honk!*

My favorite snack: apples and peanut butter



In my free time, I like to read books, practice my violin, and play with my karaoke machine.

My dream birthday party: I would have all my friends come to the beach with me and have a big beach party. We would collect seashells and play in the ocean, and we'd eat shrimp and drink strawberry lemonade.

I can't live without my BFFs.

My favorite part of AG: I like the quizzes—it's fun finding out more about my personality.

Introduce Yourself!

To find out how to be a featured reader, go to americangirl.com/playmagazine

Photo: Radlund Photography Illustrations: Tracey Wood

AG Art Gallery

Readers celebrate beautiful gardens.

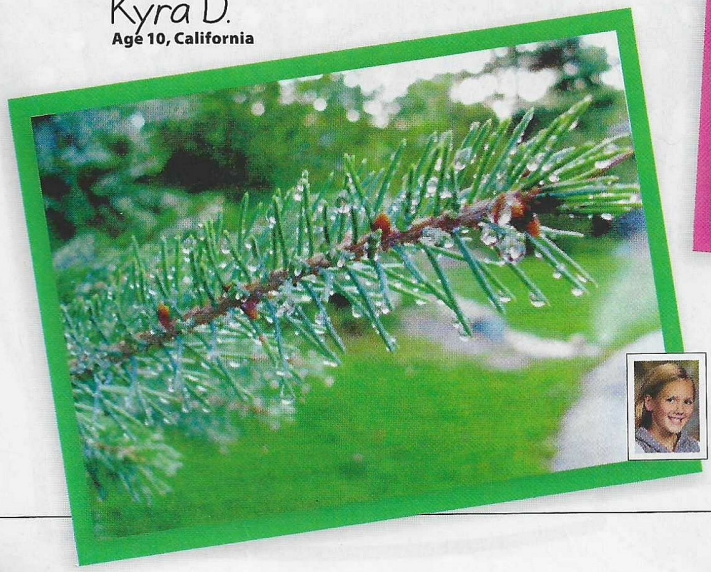
Help us fill our gallery! Send color copies of your **original artwork** or **photos** to the address on page 7. Sorry, we can't return entries.

Catherine C.
Age 11, Massachusetts

Sucheta G.
Age 13, New York

Kyra D.
Age 10, California

Jadyn A.
Age 11, Iowa

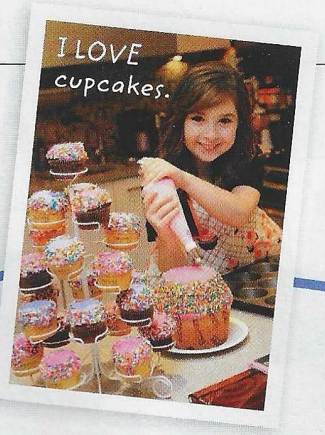


Caroline B.
Age 11, Minnesota

We've made these pictures into online puzzles! Find them at **americangirl.com/playmagazine**

Business True Stories

These girls are in business with their moms!



The Writer

Dear American Girl,

My whole life, I've watched my mom work as a writer. I've always wished I could write like her. Once, at a sleepover, a friend and I talked about books and cupcakes. Then I had an idea. Why not write books about girls in a cupcake club?

I got right to work. My mom liked what I wrote. Turns out, a publisher did, too. Since then, my mom and I have written two books together. We have two more on the way.

Writing a book is a long process. First we sit down and brainstorm. Then we write and edit (I use a red pen). We might go through seven drafts before we're done. I'm glad I have my mom working with me. It would be really hard to do this alone, even though sometimes we disagree on whose turn it is to type.

My mom inspires me to write. She says I inspire her, too. That means a lot. It's like we're each other's backup.

Sincerely,
Carrie B.
Age 10, New York

Mom and me

Business advice from Carrie

Always believe in yourself, and be willing to compromise. Once my mom and I had an argument about where a character's wedding should take place. She wanted London; I wanted Mexico. So we both gave in and had the wedding in Las Vegas.

The Inventor

Dear American Girl,

My mom never gives up, and she's taught me to be the same way. When I was eight years old, instead of complaining about something that bugged me, I wanted to fix it. My mom helped me do just that.

Here's what happened. I was taking a bath one night and asked my mom why there weren't any nice bath products for girls like me. I didn't want to use my little sister's baby bath products. It was an injustice! My idea was to make skin-care products that girls my age would love.

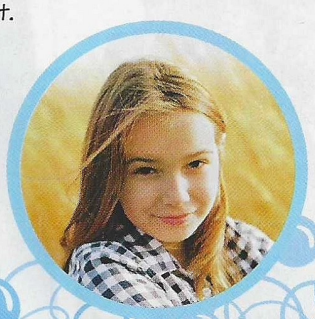
One day my mom gave me a sheet of paper and a purple pen to write down my ideas. I wanted to make products that were natural, fun, and good for your body. I listed things from face cream to acne cream to sunscreen (mine would not be sticky or smell gross). Mom and I started a company, and now girls can go to stores and buy my bath products!

As we've created this company over the last four years, my mom and I have become so close. She loves our products like I do. After all, she's just a girl at heart.

Sincerely,

Willa D.

Age 13, Connecticut



Mom and me

Business advice from Willa

If you believe in something, be confident and don't be afraid to do it. Follow your idea no matter what. Work hard no matter what.

Summer is a great time to start a business. If you have an idea, talk to a parent or another trusted adult about getting started.

Creative Corner

Photo: Radlund Photography

Fruit to Go

Cut out card. Flip over for directions.

AG Poll

Answer these questions, and then turn the page to see how your answers compare to those of other AG readers.

What vacation souvenir are you most likely to have?

* a snow globe
* a stuffed animal
* a T-shirt
* a seashell or other found object

What do you reach for when you want something sweet?

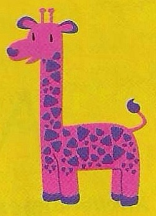
* ice cream
* fruit
* a cupcake
* chocolate

Fruit to Go

Make a creative cone with delicious fruits! Blueberries, grapes, and raspberries are already the right size. You also can use a mini melon baller or tiny measuring spoon to scoop other fruit into tiny bites. Pile the **fruit** into an **ice cream cone,** and enjoy a sweet summer treat!

AG Poll

What girls told us



Girls' vacation souvenirs:

38% a stuffed animal

33% a seashell or other found object

20% a T-shirt

9% a snow globe

Girls' favorite sweets:

37% chocolate

26% ice cream

19% a cupcake

18% fruit

To answer our weekly poll question, go to americangirl.com/playmagazine

Shining Star

For Eden D., dancing is life. She's a dance major at a performing-arts middle school, where she has classes in modern, ballet, and ballroom dance three times a day.

"If I'm upset, I dance. If I'm happy, I dance. If I'm not stretching, I'm dancing," she says.

All of her hard work eventually led her to play Young Nala in *The Lion King.* Performing on Broadway was a dream come true! But Eden soon realized that not all kids who are interested in theater and dance had the same chance to follow their dreams.

So the 13-year-old New York girl decided to start performing acts of kindness, such as buying tickets with her own money for kids who had never seen a Broadway show and could not afford tickets. She started a group that would award money to deserving kids with big dreams, and she even started leading theater workshops at church and at schools, giving confidence to shy kids who were interested in acting.

To kids whose families can't send them to dance lessons, Eden suggests going online (with parent permission) to watch dance videos and then imitate them. "If you can't afford a class, you can totally learn how to do it by yourself," Eden says. "Keep practicing, try your best, and don't give up."

You can shine, too. Use your gifts to help others. Good out-loud readers can volunteer to help younger kids with reading. Swimmers can hold swim-a-thons to raise money for a cause. Whatever your talent, you can share it to help your community.

Join the Parade

Which float is most like your personality?

Mini Quiz

1. Which T-shirt would you wear?

a. b. c.

2. Which backpack would be yours?

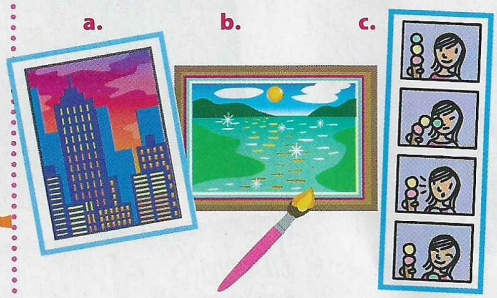
a. b. c.

3. Which girl are you at the lunch table?

a. b. c.

4. Which art project would be yours?

a. b. c.



Answers

Mostly a's

Flower Power

You love seeing and wearing pretty things. We'd find you on a fully floral float, surrounded by beautiful blooms.

Mostly b's

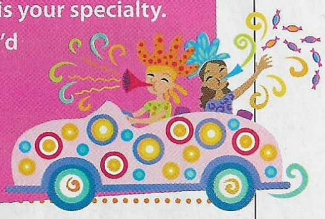
Big Balloon

You've got a big imagination and love to daydream. That's why you're perfect for a float that actually floats—a giant balloon.

Mostly c's

Crazy Car

Making a splash—and making people laugh—is your specialty. In a parade, you'd ride by in a car created to chase chuckles.



Write to Us

Be sure to include your

- first and last name,
- address and phone number,
- birth date, including year,
- school photo or other portrait,
- parent's signature.

Send us a cool envelope! Print our address neatly on the front and your return address on the back.

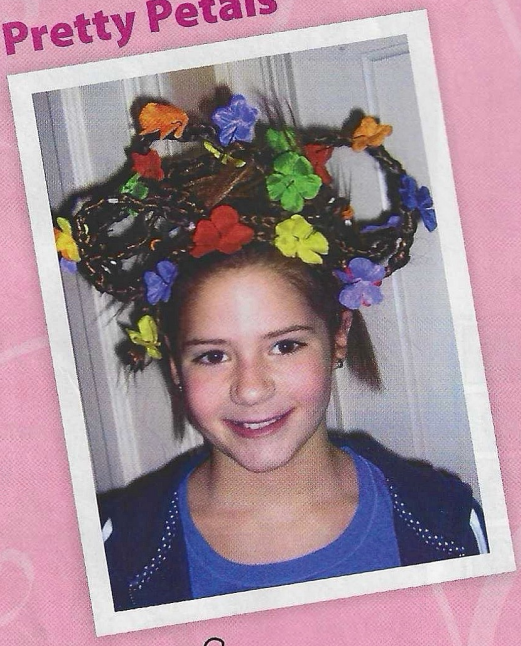
We can't print every letter, but we read everything you send to us. Hope to hear from you soon!

Envelope art by
Bea C.
Age 12, Michigan

Ha-Ha Hair

We dare you not to giggle when you look at these readers' silly styles.

Pretty Petals



Anna S.
Age 11, Ohio

Bright Idea

Arianna S.
Age 10, Minnesota

Zig-Tails

Annie W.
Age 11, Pennsylvania

Best Nest

Brielle B.
Age 9, Florida

Yippee, AG!

Elyssa F.
Age 10, New York

Crazy Curls

Grace B.
Age 9, Connecticut

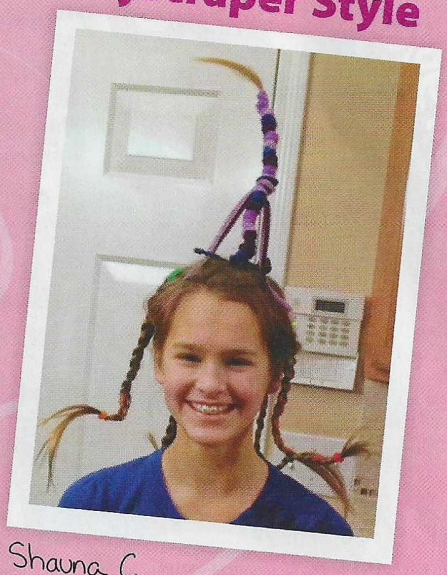
Bold Bows

Gracie R.
Age 10, Louisiana

Flower Tower

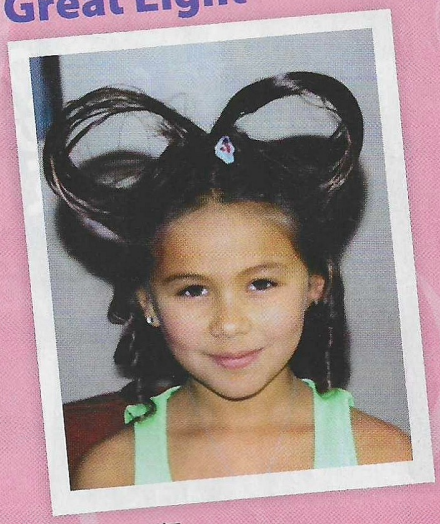
Rachel S.
Age 12, Pennsylvania

Skyscraper Style



Shauna C.
Age 12, New York

Great Eight



Elisa T.
Age 9, Maryland

New Contest: Sleeping Bags

Design a never-before-seen sleeping bag you'd love to use at a slumber party! Follow the instructions on page 7 to send us your drawing. Postmark deadline: August 9, 2013. Winners will appear in the January/February 2014 issue. Sorry—we can't return entries. ★

Illustration: Lauren Scheuer

Color!

Your favorite colors

Red: 4%
Orange: 4%
Yellow: 3%
Green: 16%
Blue: 33%
Purple: 21%
Pink: 19%

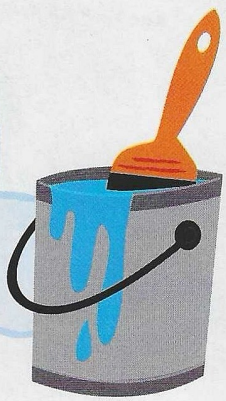
These colors make you feel...

DREAMY
BRAVE
EARTHY
AWESOM
BRIGHT
HAPPY
WARM
EXCITED
CALM

Pink clouds would make me think of eating cotton candy at a carnival.

Megan P.
Age 12, California

The top bedroom wall color is **blue!**



Glowtastical

Lightning Bug

Frankenstein's Bride

Leaping Lizards

Radioactive Grass

Kiwi Blast

Here are some of your names for this nail polish.

Neon Pickle

Lime Soda

Heavenly Honeydew

Unripe Banana

Cool Cucumber

Jungle Leaf

LUCKY

ENERGETIC

UPBEAT

CONFIDENT

PRETTY

If you could dye your hair, it would be...

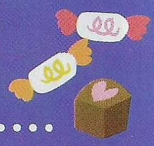
pink: 36%

blue: 35%

purple: 29%

Illustrations: Paige Pooler

Coming Up: Sweets



1. What's your favorite lollipop flavor?
   a. Orange
   b. Grape
   c. Cherry
   d. Lime
   e. Root beer
   f. Watermelon

2. What food would you choose to have in the center of a lollipop?

3. How do you prefer to eat ice cream?
   a. On a cone
   b. In a dish
   c. As a milk shake

4. Do you know how to blow a bubble with gum? Yes No

5. Pick one of each.
   Pie or cake?
   Doughnut or muffin?
   Cookie or brownie?

6. You'd love to fill a bag with
   a. gummy candies.
   b. taffy.
   c. caramels.
   d. tart candies.
   e. jelly beans.
   f. chocolate.

Send your answers to the address on page 7, along with your first and last name, address, school or portrait-style photo, and birth date. **Postmark deadline: August 9, 2013. Some answers will appear in the January/February 2014 issue.** ★

According to Aggie

Birthday Party Panic

by Laura Dower and Genevieve Kote

I'm turning 11. And this year I want the ***BEST PARTY EVER.*** Where should I have it?

Horse ranch?

Hawaii?

Paris?!

Sigh. Mom says my party will be at home next Saturday. I'd better work on my guest list.

Aggie, mail for you.

Ooh! So fancy!

Fiona Flynn Turns Eleven

Next Saturday
And You're Invited!

Arts and Crafts!
Pony Rides!
Fortune Telling!
Fashion Show!
Supersized Chocolate Fountain!
Pizza!
Bowling!
Pottery!
Music!

Dress to Impress
RSVP ASAP to
Mrs. Flynn.

Wow, this party has everything...

...including the same date as ***MY*** party. Seriously?

Guests who won't be at my party ☹

WAHOOO!

Hey, Liv, did you get Fiona's invite?

Already got my dress. You?

I had to face facts. Not only had Fiona taken my party date—she'd planned the party of the century with a fancy-shmancy dress code. My closet is fashion challenged.

Grr. This wasn't how I expected I'd be spending my 11th birthday.

Maybe I could wear that pink dress that I wore at the spring concert?

Um...

The next Saturday, we showed up at Fiona's party—along with a million other people.

Did you see the pony?

Fiona

Mmm, chocolate.

I wish this were my party. Oh well.

Look, they're bringing out a giant piñata!

Borrowed from Liv's closet

Suddenly, something exploded.

Splat!

The chocolate fountain had gone kerflooey.

Somebody stop it from spraying! It's messing up my dress!

Fiona

Hmm...

I shut that fountain **DOWN.**

Ag, you saved the party!

Well, I didn't want to see the chocolate wasted.

Fiona

I'm sorry your birthday was spoiled. Fiona owes you.

Nah, I'm glad we came. She doesn't owe me. I had fun.

I had fun, too—because of **YOU!**

It was definitely **NOT** my best birthday ever. But I did learn that gifts don't always come in wrapped boxes. And birthdays are as big a deal as you want them to be. Mine was fun because I spent it with my BFF—and had all the cake I could eat.

Don't miss my next misadventure, when I face an even bigger challenge than a chocolate explosion:

THE DREADED SPELLING TEST

Stamp Style

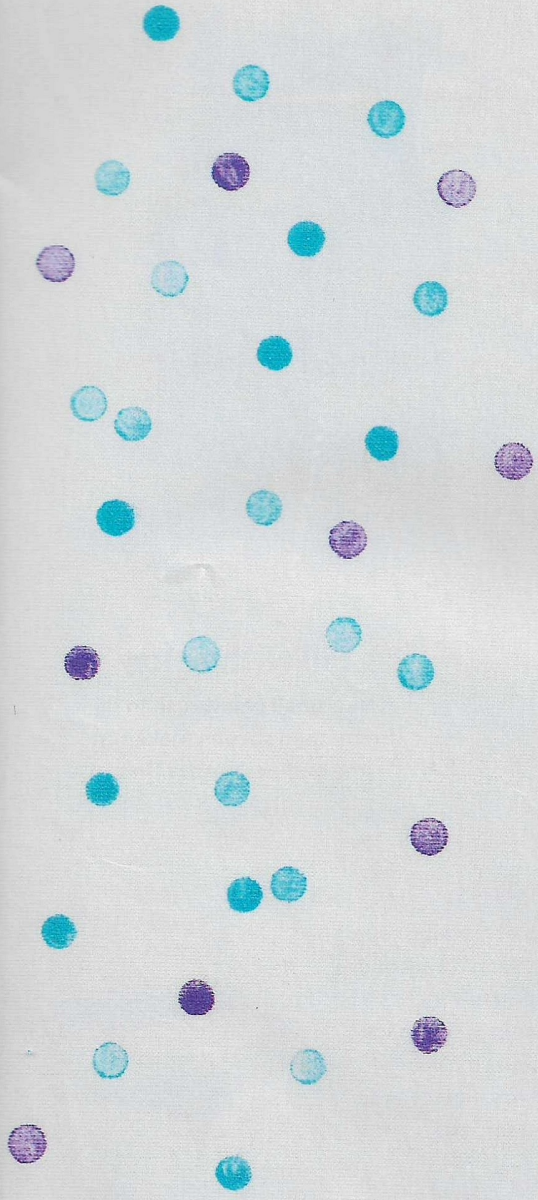
Add stamped designs to clothing for art you can wear!

Cardboard Tubes

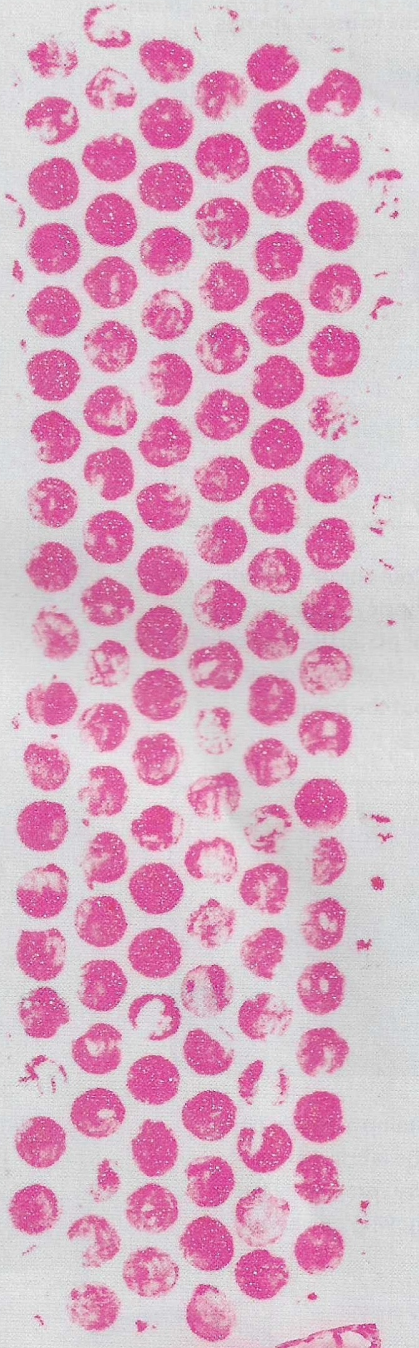
Use a cardboard tube to stamp circles. Or bend it into a new shape, such as a heart or teardrop.

Photos: Radlund Photography; Illustrations: Monika Roe

Pencil Erasers



Bubble Wrap



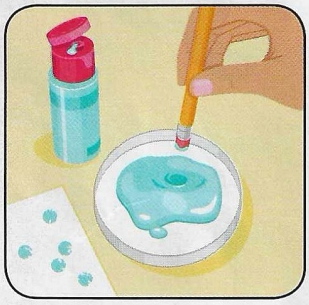
Celery

YOU WILL NEED

- Wax paper
- Cardboard
- Nontoxic fabric paint
- Disposable lids or plates
- Wooden craft sticks
- Items to use as stamps
- Paper

1. Cover your work surface with wax paper. Place cardboard between any fabric layers.

2. Pour some nontoxic fabric paint onto a lid or plate. Use a wooden craft stick to spread out the paint.



3. Dip your stamp into the paint, making sure to cover its surface. Practice stamping on paper first.

4. Stamp a design on the fabric. Let paint dry completely before moving or wearing.

Fill with color

Use a small paintbrush to fill in stamped shapes. Make sure the outlines are dry first.

Make stripes

Attach a strip of masking tape to the fabric. Attach a second strip of tape a few inches below it. Stamp in the space between the two pieces of tape, and let dry. Remove the tape for a stamped stripe!

Note:
Ask an adult to read instructions on the fabric-paint package before washing stamped clothing.

Ask an adult's permission before stamping any fabric or clothing.

Add an accent

Stamp a design in just the right spot to dress up a T-shirt.

Invent shapes

Overlap stamped shapes to create new ones.

Design a pattern

Use the same stamp all over the fabric for a custom print—like polka dots!

Stamp a border

Make a row of stamped designs along the edge of a skirt or T-shirt.

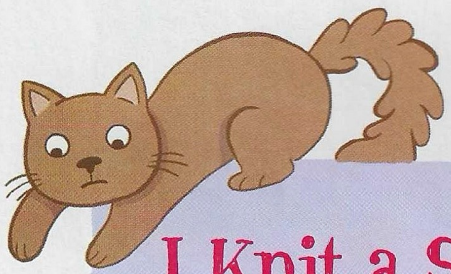
For a closer look at these crafts—plus some bonus stamping tips—visit **americangirl.com/playmagazine**

Poetry Contest Winners

Last November, we invited girls to write original poems. From the more than 2,000 entries, we picked six winners that made us smile.

Winning Words

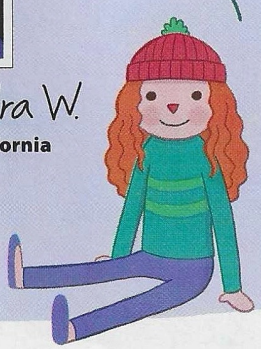
These poems are sure to brighten your day!



I Knit a Sweater

I knit a sweater
For my cat.
But he did not
Like that.
So I knit him
A very fine hat.
But he wouldn't wear it,
And that was that.
But then he chased
My ball of yarn
All the way
Into the barn.
So my doll has a sweater
And a very fine hat
But my ball of yarn
Is for my cat.

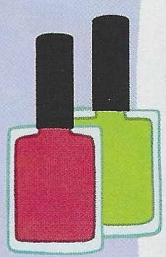
Cassandra W.
Age 10, California



The Troubled Fifth

The baby, fifth, last:
Names that are given to me.
Nobody seems to know
What it's like to be the baby toe.

I can't be painted or polished
Like the other toes.
My nail is too small.
Oh! Why can't I be tall!



Stubbed, jammed, shoved—
I am always hitting things!
Chairs, tables, couches, beds—
It's worse than hitting your head!

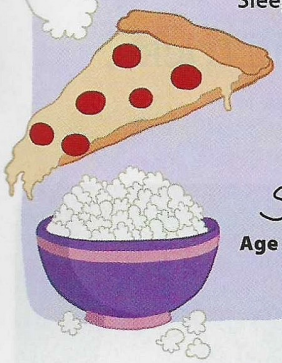
Being the smallest is never fun,
Especially if you're judged by the other toes.
But I have to admit…
It's better than being the nose!

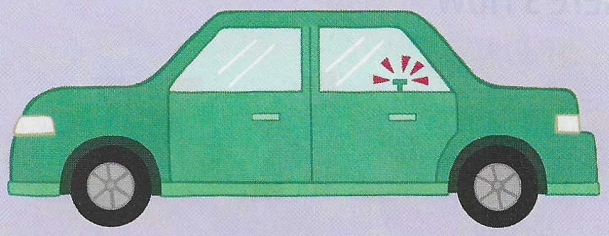
Sierra W.
Age 13, Pennsylvania

Sleepover Haiku

Popcorn on my lips,
Joyful giggles in the air,
Sleepover with friends.

Samantha G.
Age 9, Washington, D.C.





Get in the Car!

Mom says, "Get in the car!"
I say, "I can't!"
Mom says, "Just get in!"
I say, "I really can't!"
"Get in!"
"No!"
"Get in!"
"No!"
"Get in, get in!"
"No!"
"Why won't you get in the car?"
"Because the door is locked!"

Faith Jewel Z.
Age 9, New York

Twin Spin

I look both ways and I see double.
Twice the fun, twice the trouble!

It seems like everything we have to share,
But we always know we'll always care.

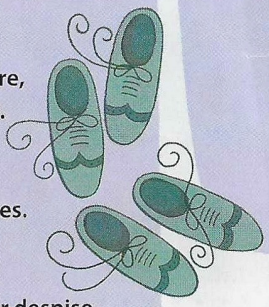
Matching socks, matching shoes.
When I'm with you, I never have the blues.

Four purple earrings, four blue eyes.
We sometimes fight, but each other we'll never despise.

Because we both look the same,
People can never match the person with the name.

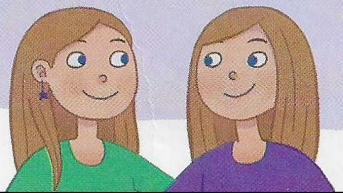
People can never tell us apart.
Knowing our names is just the start!

We will never ever sever.
Forever and always, twins forever!



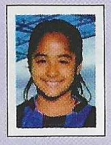
Brooke L.
Age 11, North Carolina

Paige L.
Age 11, North Carolina

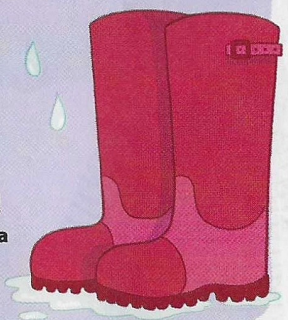


Ode to Soccer

Soccer, soccer, I love to play
Even though it's a rainy day.
Practice, practice,
"Come on, let's shoot!"
Even though I'm in my rain boots.



Jillian D.
Age 10, Canada



Illustrations: Stephanie Concepcion

Pack Your Bags

You'll be on your way to easy packing with these tips and tricks.

1. Get info from a parent so that you know what to pack.

2. Start with the basics.

3. Create outfits for each day of your trip.

4. Pick accessories.

5. Pack your bathroom bag.

6. Don't go overboard—bring only what you need.

Roll outfits together to save space. This makes it easier to quickly grab an outfit, too.

Tuck things into shoes.

Place shoes along the walls of your suitcase.

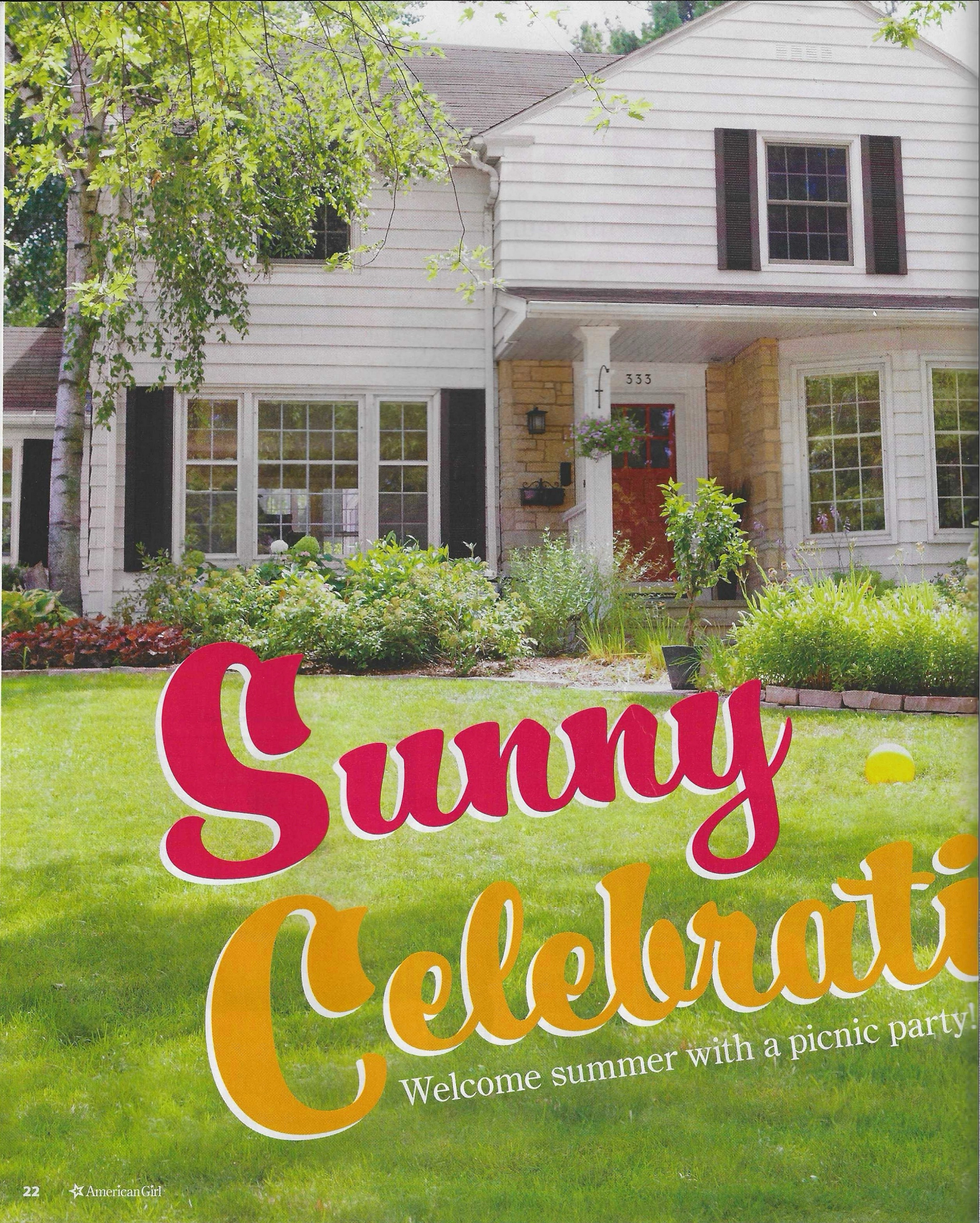
If you have the space, pack a few extras.

Put your bathroom bag inside a plastic bag to protect your clothes.

Stash small items, such as a swimsuit or scarf, between the rolls.

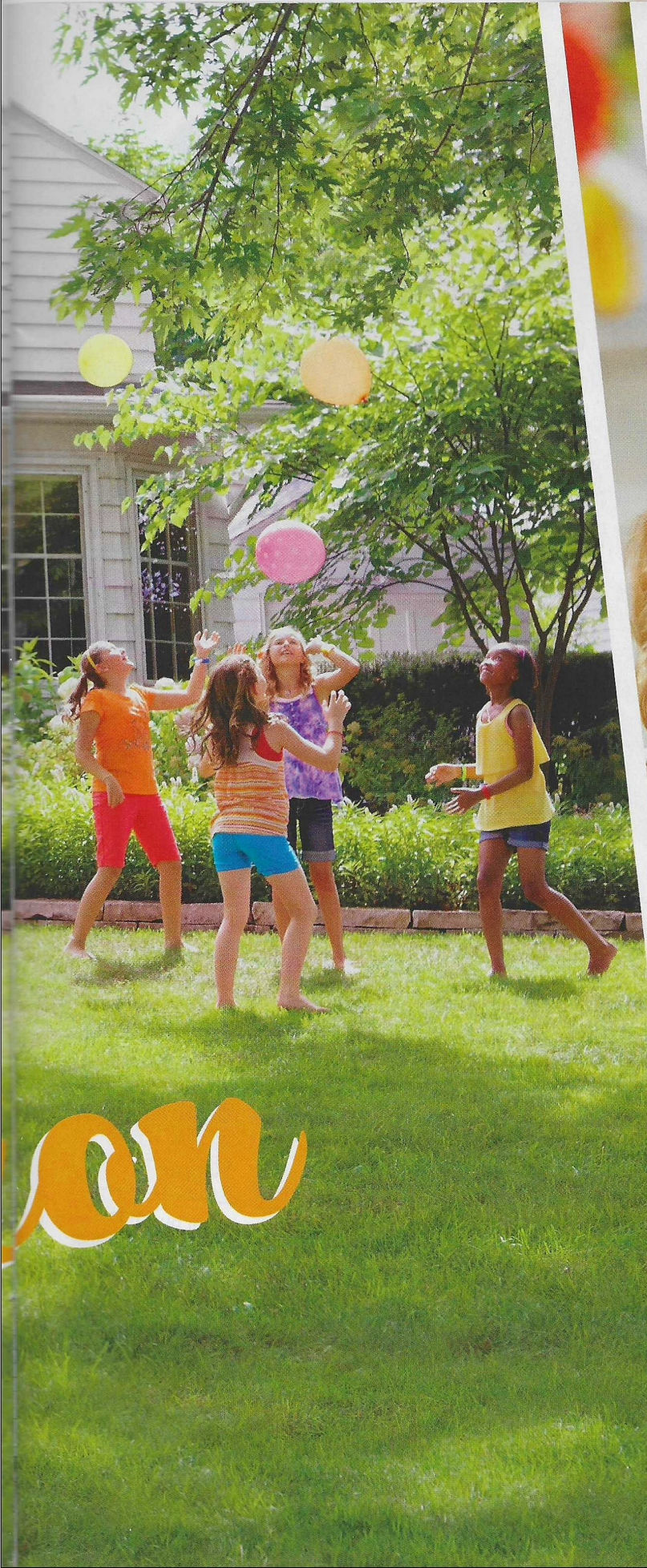
But be sure to leave room for souvenirs! ★

Illustrations: Julia Bereciartu



Sunny Celebrati

Welcome summer with a picnic party!



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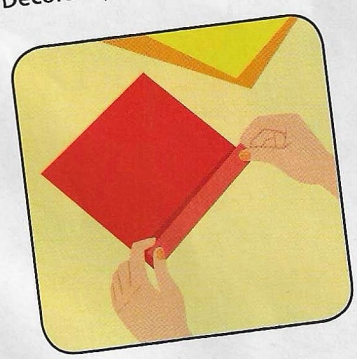
Invite on a Stick

Make an invitation that looks like a cool treat! Fold a 4-by-4-inch square of scrapbook paper in half to make a rectangular card. Use scissors to round off the top. Write the party details inside. Close the card, and use double-stick tape to attach a wooden craft stick to the back.

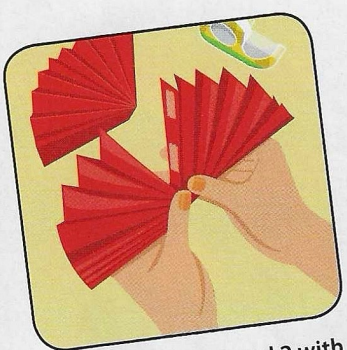
Summer Sunbursts

Decorate your backyard with these fun fliers.

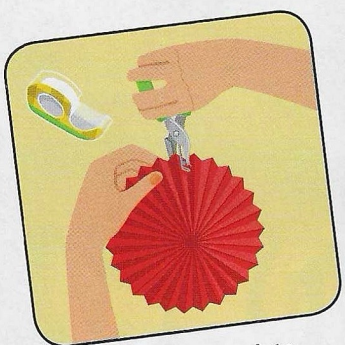


1. Accordion-fold an 8½-by-11-inch sheet of colored paper lengthwise. Each fold should be about 1 inch wide.

2. Once the paper is accordion-folded, fold it in half widthwise. Use double-stick tape to join the paper where it meets. You should have a fan shape.



3. Repeat steps 1 and 2 with 2 more pieces of paper. Attach the 3 fan shapes together along their edges with double-stick tape to make a circle.



4. Use a paper punch to make a hole. Hang the sunburst with string. Make larger or smaller sunbursts using paper in different sizes.

Glow Jars

Reuse glass jars to make cheery lanterns. Start with a clean, empty jar. Fold a piece of tissue paper so that it's about 5 layers thick. Use a large paper punch to cut tissue-paper circles. Cut a length of clear packing tape and lay it flat, sticky-side up. Arrange the paper circles on the packing tape, making sure to leave some empty space along the edges of the tape. Wrap the tape around the jar so that the ends touch. Trim any overlap. Put an LED light inside the jar to make it shine!

Table Toppers

Eat dinner at a pretty picnic table. Spread out a tablecloth, and set a place for each guest. Then decorate with these ideas.

- Paper chain: Make a colorful paper chain. Cut many 1-by-6-inch strips of scrapbook paper. Form one strip into a circle and tape the ends together. Link the next strip through the first and tape its ends together. Continue adding links until you have a long chain.
- Napkin roll-ups: For a napkin ring, cut a 1-by-4-inch strip of scrapbook paper. Roll up a square napkin, and flatten it so that it's a rectangle. Place a fork on top of the napkin and wrap with the paper strip. Hold the ends of the strip together with tape.
- Name flags: Help guests keep track of their drinks. Cut a 4-inch piece of paper tape. Wrap the tape around a straw, making a flag. Write a guest's name on the tape, and trim the end.

Photos: Steven Talley Styling: Aubre Andrus, Tricia Doherty, Ashley Franklin

Do-It-Yourself Lemonade

Cool off with a fruit refresher! Have a lemonade bar where guests can choose their own flavor combinations. Make a pitcher of regular lemonade and then provide ice and fresh fruit that guests can mix in, such as these:

* sliced strawberries
* pineapple tidbits
* mango chunks
* blueberries
* kiwi slices

Sprinkle Pops

These treats look like ice cream bars, but they won't melt!

1. Ask an adult to make a pan of rice cereal treats and to cut them into 2-by-4-inch rectangles. Push a food-safe stick into the end of each treat.
2. Ask an adult to melt chocolate chips or colored candy melts in the microwave. Dip each pop in the melted candy to coat. Let excess candy drip into a bowl.
3. Hold the pop over an empty bowl and sprinkle it with candy sprinkles. Stick the pop upright in a Styrofoam block to let set.

Dog Days

Ask an adult to make mini hot dogs, and use dinner rolls for buns. Serve each hot dog in a paper cupcake liner.

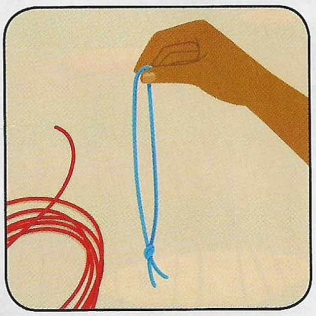
Salad Sticks

Turn salad fixings into finger food. Slide ingredients onto toothpicks, and dip into dressings. Here are some combos to try:

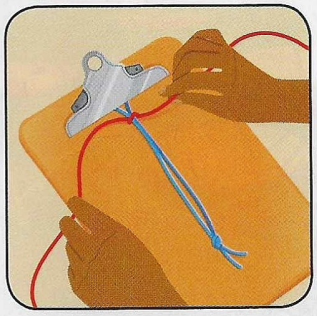
- Blueberries, spinach, strawberries
- Cucumber, cheese, tomato
- Carrot, lettuce, tomato

Neat Knots

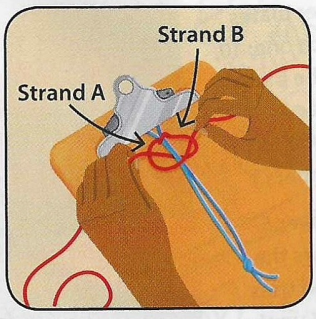
Learn a new knot to make a bracelet.



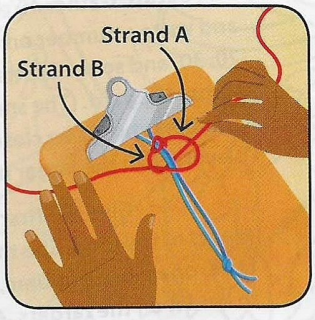
1. Start with a piece of paracord (available at craft stores) that can wrap around your wrist twice plus 9 inches. Fold the cord in half and tie the ends in a knot.



2. Cut a 6½-foot piece of paracord in a new color. Tie a knot around the first cord, about ½ inch from the folded end. Hold the loop with a clipboard. You should have 2 equal-length strands.



3. Bring strand A over the center cords and under strand B. Next bring strand B under the center cords and over strand A. Pull both ends tightly.



4. Bring strand A back over the cords and under strand B. Bring strand B under the cords and over strand A. Pull tightly. Repeat steps 3 and 4 until you reach the end. Tie ends in a knot.

Wet & Wacky Relay

Divide into teams and give each team a set of old adult-sized clothes. (Be sure to ask a parent's permission before using the clothes.) Players line up behind a water-filled bucket and put their team's set of clothes in the water. On "Go!" one girl from each team has to put on the wet clothes over her swimsuit. Then she runs to the opposite end of the yard and back. When she gets back, she removes the wet clothing and places it in the bucket. Then the next girl takes her turn. The team that finishes first wins.

Food Fight

In this game, it's OK to play with your food!

The setup: Gather 10 paper plates and write a number on each one: 10, 20, 30, and so on. Scatter the plates across the yard. (The smaller numbers should be closer to the players than the larger numbers.)

The game: Give the first player 5 pieces of toy food. She throws the food, one piece at a time, and tries to land it on the targets. Add up the number of points she gets before moving on to the next girl. Keep taking turns. The first player to get 300 points wins.

Volley Balloon

Try this challenge with your friends. Start by throwing one balloon up in the air. Working together, keep the balloon in the air as long as you can. After the balloon has been hit 5 times, add a second balloon. Keep both balloons in the air. Continue to add balloons. Once one of the balloons touches the ground, the game is over. See how many you and your friends can keep going!

Picnics to Go

Send guests home with picnic goodies. Wrap up party favors inside a bandanna. Then place the wrapped favors inside a cardboard takeout-style box. ★

Quiz

Helping Hand

by Aubre Andrus

Learn how you can put your interests, skills, and dreams to work as a volunteer.

1. I think it's important that we all try to

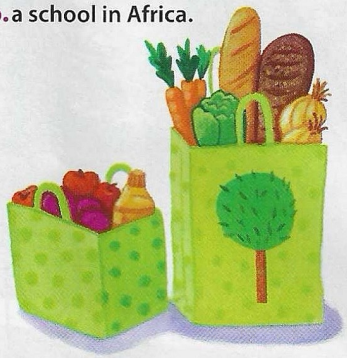
a. save endangered animals.
b. inspire others to dream big.
c. help less-fortunate people in times of need.
d. make the world a "greener" place.

2. I get inspired when I hear a story about

a. a girl who visits her grandma in a nursing home every week.
b. someone who worked really hard for her success.
c. families who "adopt" another family over the holidays and donate gifts.
d. a school that's planting trees for Earth Day.

3. If I won $1 million, I would use some of the money to build

a. an animal hospital in my hometown.
b. a school in Africa.



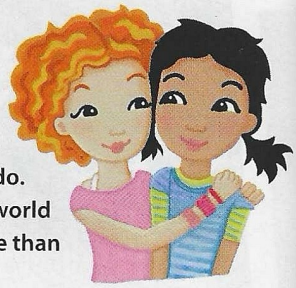
c. a grocery store in a neighborhood that didn't have one.
d. a public park in a city.

4. I like to dream that one day, I'll

a. foster dogs and cats until they find their "forever" homes.
b. coach a sports team and help them win a championship.
c. organize an art auction to raise money for a kids' charity.
d. invent a process that turns plastic bags into fabric for clothes.

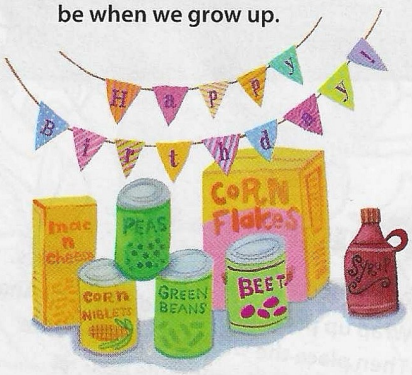
5. Sometimes I like to remind myself

a. to put others before myself.
b. that almost nothing is impossible.
c. that I'm lucky to have everything I do.
d. to leave the world a better place than I found it.



6. I once had a birthday party

a. for my dog!
b. at which we wore costumes that showed what we wanted to be when we grow up.



c. and asked for donations to a charity instead of presents.
d. during which we recycled "trash" into clever crafts.

7. I feel as if I'm helping most when I'm

a. spending time with someone face-to-face.
b. attending a charity event.
c. donating my time or resources to a great cause.
d. able to see the difference I've made.

8. My friends tell me that I'm very

a. friendly and easy to get along with.
b. confident and positive.
c. gracious and appreciative for everything.
d. responsible and aware of how my actions affect others.

9. I'm the kind of girl who

a. always wears a smile.
b. tells my friend "Great job!" when she gets an A on a test.
c. would give my bracelet to a friend if she really likes it.
d. picks up litter when I see it on the sidewalk.

Illustrations Jennifer Kalis

Answers

If you picked mostly **a**'s, you could be an

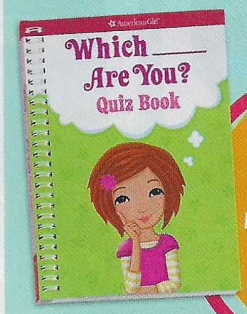
Animal Shelter Volunteer.

You love to help others—especially the furry critters. See what kinds of food and supplies your local animal shelter needs as donations, or ask your family if all of you can sign up to walk dogs on the weekends. Organizing a craft or bake sale could raise money for the local animal shelter, too.

If you picked mostly **b**'s, you could be a

Marathon Volunteer.

You're super friendly and supportive. Handing out water on the sidelines of a race and cheering for the competitors is fun, and it makes you feel good, too. Marathon runners work hard and appreciate encouragement from helpers like you. Maybe you'll get inspired to run a long-distance race yourself one day.



More fun quizzes can be found in the Which ____ Are You? Quiz Book. ★

If you picked mostly **c**'s, you could be a

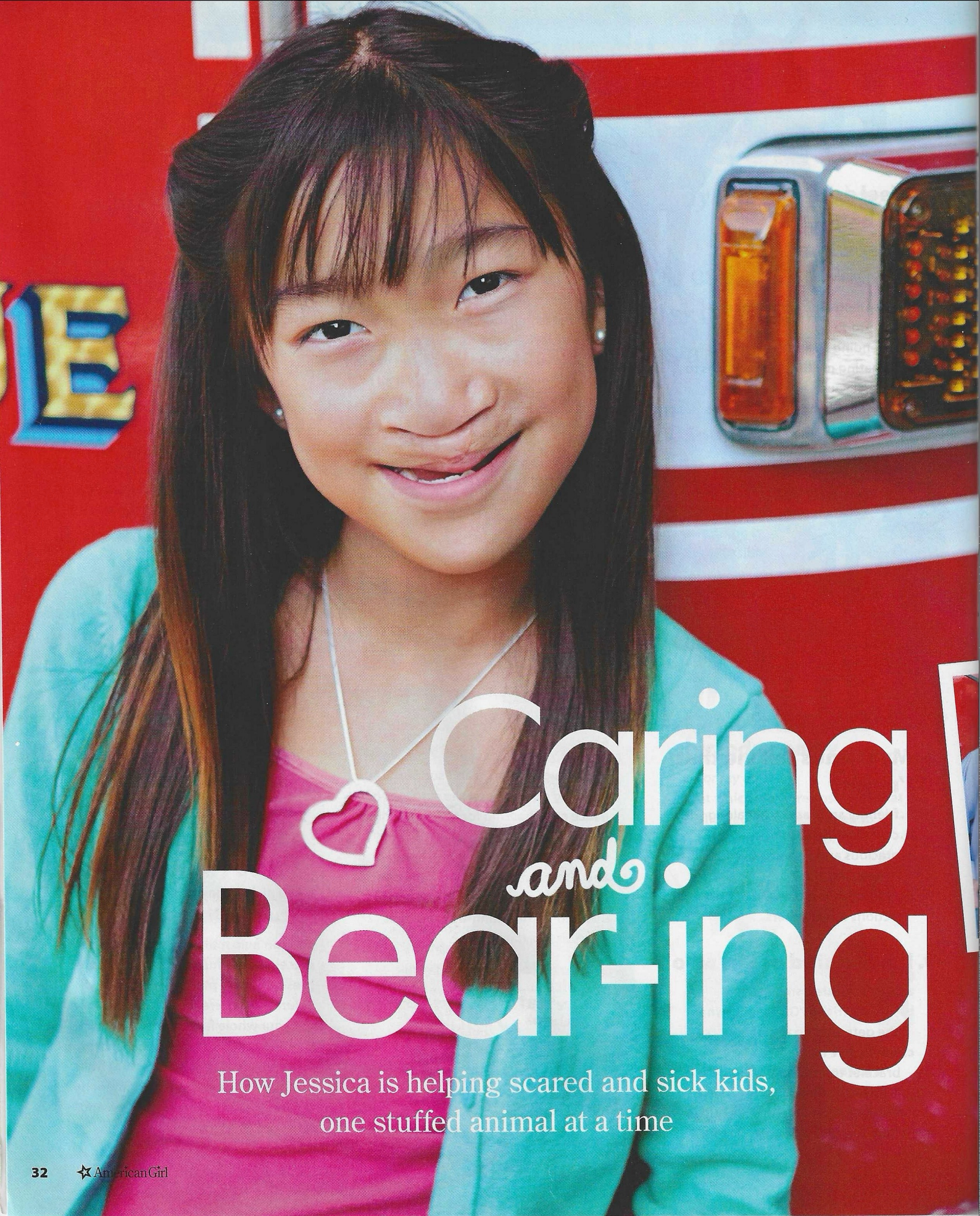
Food Pantry Volunteer.

Food pantries always need help and supplies. Check online to see exactly what your local pantry is looking for, or ask a parent if you can go in to help organize incoming donations, discard expired food, or deliver supplies in your community. Every little bit can make a big difference for a lot of people!

If you picked mostly **d**'s, you could be a

Nature Volunteer.

You can help make the world a better place! Science museums, local nature preserves, and public parks all need volunteers. There are lots of ways to get your whole family involved, from keeping green spaces clean to planting new flowers to grooming hiking trails. And you can help the environment by recycling, conserving electricity, and reusing items when possible.



Caring and Bear-ing

How Jessica is helping scared and sick kids, one stuffed animal at a time

I made up a word for what you do when you squeeze a stuffed animal.

I say that you "huggle" it, which I guess is a combination of "hug" and "cuddle." I don't know when I started saying that, but it's a habit now. Stuffed animals bring comfort to kids, and I'd like it if every kid had a stuffed animal to huggle, especially when that kid is feeling sad or scared or alone.

I know what it's like to feel like that. My life started a long way from my home in California. China is my birthplace, and when I was born, I had a cleft lip and cleft palate. Basically, it means that my upper lip and the top of my mouth didn't form as usual. (I just tell people that I have a broken lip.) Soon after my birth, I ended up in an orphanage. I was sick, and because a cleft lip and cleft palate can make it really hard for a baby to eat properly, no one expected that I would live long.

Dad and Mom and me

But I proved everyone wrong. I did live, and I grew. A couple of surgeries started fixing my broken lip. I don't remember much about my life at the orphanage—the workers do the best they can, but it's not a great place to be a kid. You don't have anything that's yours, and there's no one to huggle. Not a lot of kids who are older than babies ever get adopted. By the time I turned five, no one had adopted me.

These stuffed animals will brighten kids' days.

But my adoptive parents, half a world away in the United States, had decided that I was the perfect daughter for them. I went to live with a wonderful foster family for a while (they still keep in touch), and they helped me get ready to be in a family and learn the faces and names of all my new relatives. One day my adoptive parents arrived to take me home. I didn't speak any English, but I had waited so long to have parents, and I was glad to be going home with them. I think I knew somehow that they were wonderful. My mom says that I didn't cry one single tear. I wasn't sad or scared—just ready and happy.

So, fast-forward to last year. I was nine and living here in California. I had learned English and was loving my school—we have a really good no-bullies program, and everybody is nice to everybody. One day, I was cleaning out my room because I wanted it to be less "little girl" and more grown-up. Stuffed animals were all over my room, and I decided that I had outgrown most of them. Our apartment looks out over a fire station, and that gave me an idea. Maybe my bears and other stuffed animals could help comfort kids in scary situations.

Photos: Julie Cruz

Safety First! We took our photos in a service garage for fire trucks—no truck was ever needed for an emergency, and we had permission to be there.

My mom checked to make sure it was OK for me to bring my stuffed animals to the fire station. I put them in a big trash bag and delivered them. The firefighters thought it was a great idea and put some in the fire truck and some in the ambulance. They promised to give them to kids they met who were scared or injured. And that was the beginning of my stuffed-animal project.

Taking my bears to the fire station made me feel great, and I wanted to do it again. But since I'd already given away my own stuffed animals, I needed help from other kids. I talked to my school principal and the student council about doing a bear drive, and the kids at my school donated 400 stuffed animals.

I didn't like the idea of putting bears into trash bags, and I had really good luck when a local company offered to donate a bunch of pretty, colorful bags for me to use for delivering bears. So I planned another bear drive—this one with a local restaurant, which offered free food in exchange for a donated stuffed animal. We collected 700 bears that day! Amazingly, they all fit into our van. But they don't really fit into our home—we had to get a storage unit to handle all the bears.

In just a little more than a year, I've been able to put bags of bears into fire trucks and ambulances in several cities. It takes a lot of time and hard work organizing the bears, tagging them with my project's name, bagging them up, and delivering them. But I feel so proud and happy that the bears will help kids and give them something to huggle. I know that a bear would have helped me when I was in the orphanage. When you huggle a bear, you feel safe and warm. Every kid should feel that way. And I'll keep collecting bears for as long as I can in order to make that happen. ★

Making sure each bag is packed just right

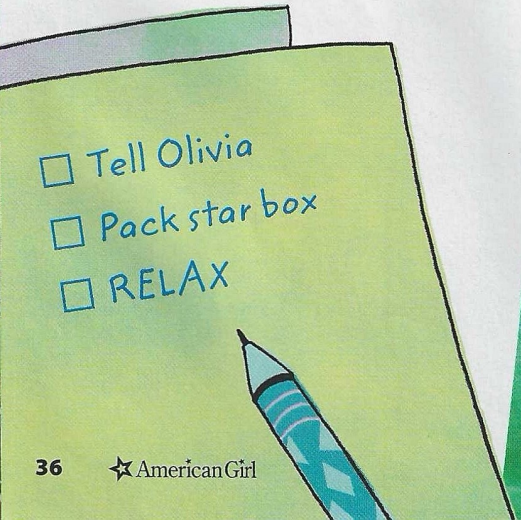
Firefighters have been so happy to get my donations!

Moving Survival Guide

Things you need to know about packing up, moving away, being new, and fitting in

Big News

You've just found out that you'll be moving. Whether it's to a new house, a new state, or even a new country, moving is a big change. You might feel excited, sad, or some of both. Here's how to manage your move.



Tell your friends.

Start with one of your closest friends. Share your news with her and then with more friends. Be sure to make plans for keeping in touch!

To do that, plan weekly emails or online chats, arrange to mail a stuffed animal back and forth with letters, or give stationery to friends.

"I've moved nine times. I always have a good-bye party and give out stamped envelopes with my new address and stationery so that my friends can write. I also have them write their addresses in my address book so that I can keep in touch."

Sabrina R.
Age 10, Tennessee

Calm your nerves.

Moving is a big deal. You might need to adjust to the idea and figure things out. Give yourself time to relax, clear your head, and take some deep breaths. You'll be better off.

Chill out by taking a walk with a parent, making a special dinner or dessert, or looking up details about your new neighborhood (you'll have fewer worries if you know what to expect).

Pack your things.

The first box you pack should contain your all-time-favorite stuff—things that make your room yours. Draw stars and your name on the box when it's full. That should be the first box you unpack in your new room, which will start feeling homey right away.

Your star box could include

- a special blanket,
- a beloved book,
- a soft nightshirt,
- trophies,
- posters,
- photos of friends,
- stuffed animals.

Illustrations Josée Masse

Moving Day

You're in your new place. It's time to settle in. You might find yourself asking these questions:

"Where's the ___?"

Get to know your new home. Find out these things:

- Where the trash goes
- Where light switches are in all rooms
- Where to put your laundry
- Where your pet's food dish should be
- Where to turn the shower control so that the water temperature is just right

"Where's my ___?"

Figure out where your bedroom furniture will go. Try something new if you can—such as putting your bed beneath a window or your dresser inside your closet. Do as much unpacking as you can the first day.

Decide on a good unpacking order, such as:

1. Star box
2. Bedding—and make your bed so that you'll have a place to sleep
3. Clothes
4. Desk and bookshelf stuff
5. Stuffed animals and dolls
6. Everything else

"Where will I ___?"

If you can, check out your new school. Ask a parent to take you to meet your principal or teacher. Talk about how you'll get to school and what your day will be like. Also check out

- nearby parks,
- restaurants,
- the movie theater,
- dance studio or sports field.

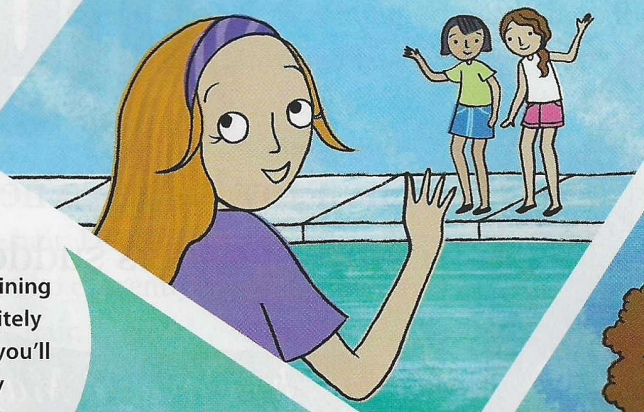
Being New

When you're the new girl, you might feel awkward, shy, or out of place. The truth is, lots of girls have felt that way. Here's some advice from a few former new girls:

Friends

"If you can, play outside your house. That way, other kids can see that there's a new kid in the neighborhood. If you see kids who seem nice, invite them to play."

Brooklynn G.
Age 13, South Dakota



School

"On the first day of school, I observed what people's personalities and hobbies were so that when I had enough courage, I knew who I wanted to talk to. I made my first friend by saying, 'I like your shoes.' "

Kristen C.
Age 11, Wisconsin

Activities

"I made lots of friends by joining clubs and sports. It's definitely hard at the beginning, but you'll be surprised how many people you can meet!"

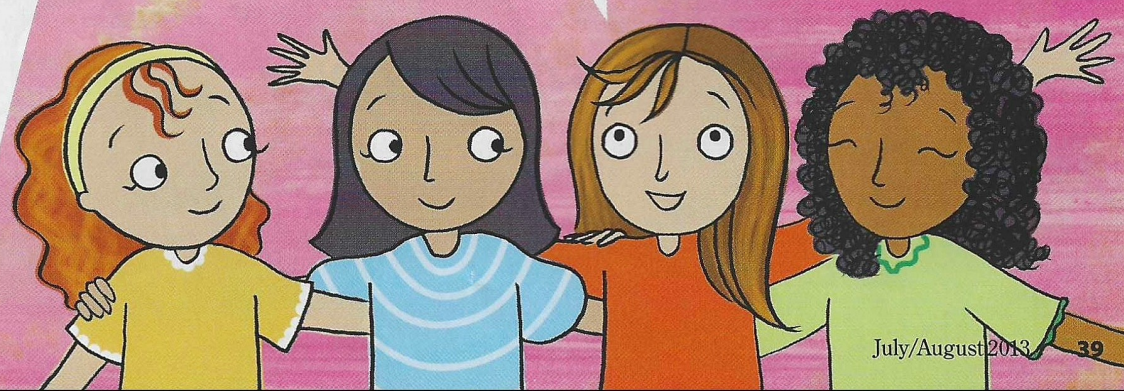
Caroline B.
Age 11, Virginia

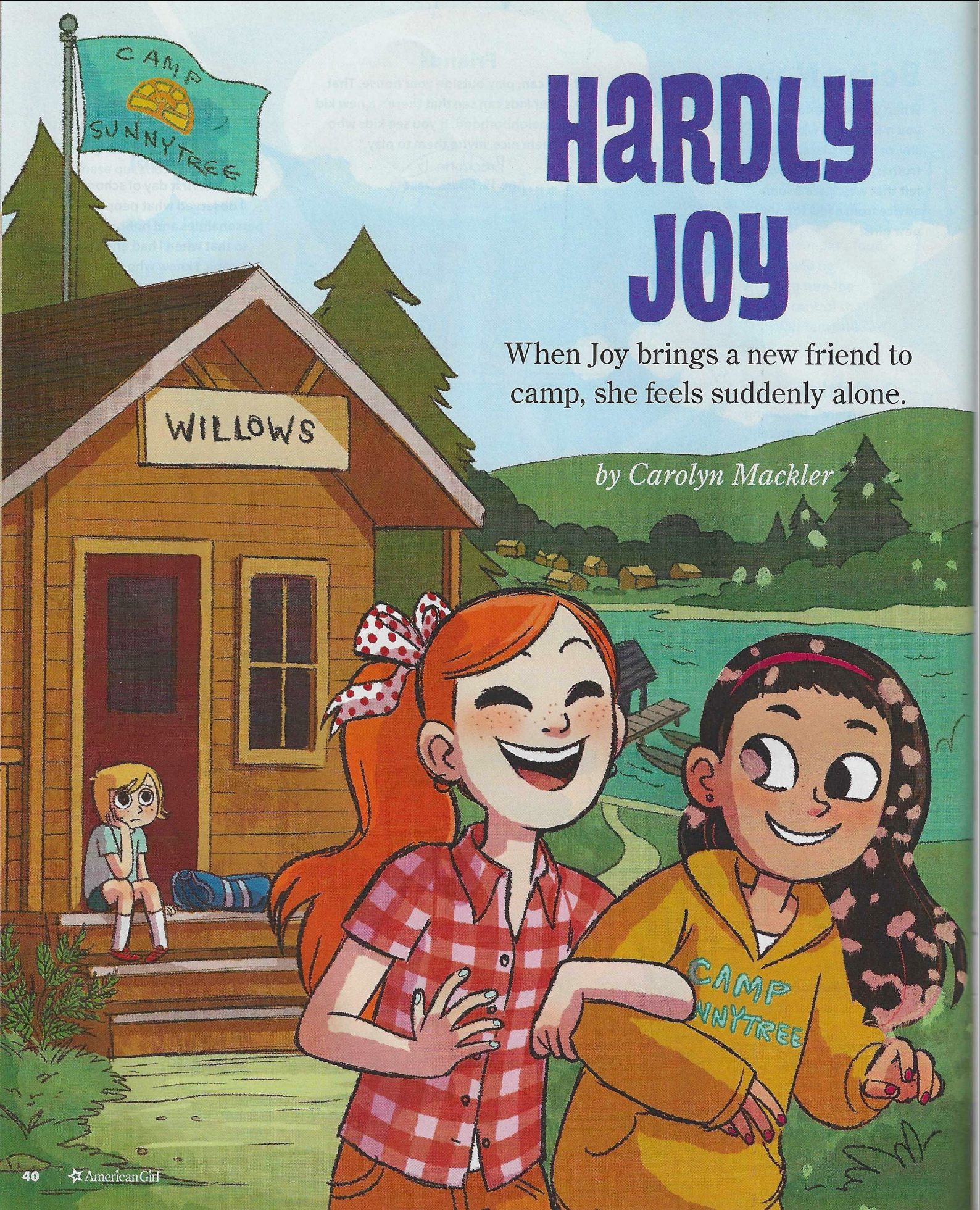
"I moved two years ago. At first I was angry and sad, and I wished to move back home. But now, it would be hard to go back. I've made new friends, and my teachers are nice. It's OK to be sad when you move. But if you try new things and meet new people, you can have fun. Trust me."

Megan V.
Age 12, Minnesota

After a While

Sooner or later, you'll stop feeling so brand-new. You'll be at home.





HARDLY JOY

When Joy brings a new friend to camp, she feels suddenly alone.

by Carolyn Mackler

Two weeks. Two whole weeks. Two whole incredible weeks at Camp Sunnytree. It's going to be as amazing as last year. That was my first summer at sleepaway camp. I overcame my fear of spiders and made a best camp friend, Maya. This summer is actually going to be better because my best home friend, Isabelle, is coming with me. I've told Isabelle all about Maya and how they both love frogs (slightly weird) and swimming (pretty normal) and hair accessories (very cool). Maya lives two states away, and she's tall with bright orange hair. I called Maya and told her about Isabelle, who currently has watermelon-pink feathers in her hair.

I can't wait until the three of us are together. And we're almost there!

I twist around in the backseat, wriggle onto my knees, and wave at Isabelle's car. Her family is driving down the pebbly road right behind us. We live a few hours from Sunnytree. Maya told me that she'll be arriving on the camp bus and will dash to Willows as soon as she arrives. That's the cabin for ten-year-old girls. Last year, Maya and I were in Sunflowers.

"Don't get out of your seatbelt yet, Joy," my mom tells me, glancing in the rearview mirror.

Joy. That's my name. When your name is Joy, people expect you to be happy. And I am—mostly. Since I'm no longer afraid of spiders, I have only lightning to worry about.

We turn into Sunnytree. I wait until my parents get out of the car. Then I grab a blank postcard from my bag, write a quick note, and slip it onto the front seat.

Isabelle and I hug our parents good-bye. We promise them we'll brush our teeth and eat the occasional spear of broccoli. Our counselor, Dina, leads us over to the Willows cabin.

"Is Maya here yet?" I ask Dina as she pushes open the creaky screen door. I think I see a spider darting under a dresser. I hug my arms around my chest. *Not scared, not scared…*

"Nope," Dina says, checking her clipboard. "She's coming on the three-thirty bus."

I glance at Isabelle. She's carrying her backpack over her shoulders and holding a flowery orange pillow under one arm. We both have huge duffels that are going to be delivered on the camp trailer later.

"Speaking of Maya—" Dina turns to Isabelle. "You two have been assigned to share a bunk bed. You can decide now whether you want the top or bottom bunk, or you can wait until she arrives."

"What about me?" I ask. I wave at some girls I know from last year. Maybe I'll be bunked with

Illustrations Vera Brosgol

one of them, and we'll be next door to Maya and Isabelle's bed.

"The number of campers wasn't even this year," Dina tells me, "so you'll actually have a bunk bed to yourself." She smiles brightly. "That means you don't have to battle it out for top or bottom."

"Lucky," Isabelle says.

But I don't feel lucky. I feel . . . No! I push the jealous feeling away. It's going to be OK.

I smile at my counselor and say, "Sounds great."

Maya bursts through the door of Willows. Her hair is pulled back with a polka-dot ribbon. She grins at me and then turns to Isabelle and squeals, "I've heard everything about you! I love your hair! I'm so excited for camp."

"Guess what?" Isabelle shoots back to her. "We're sharing a bunk bed! And I love your hair, too!"

"Do you care whether you're on the bottom or top bunk?"

"Not really."

"Me neither!"

They both laugh and then they hug. They HUG. My best home friend and my best camp friend have known each other for thirty-seven seconds and they're hugging. I say hi to Maya. She grins at me. I reassure myself that everything is going to be OK, and then I retreat to my bed. It's in the corner that's farthest away from everyone else. It also happens to be right next to the bathroom. Yep. When someone flushes the toilet, guess who's the first to find out?

I lie down on the bottom bunk for a few minutes, my arms folded behind my head. Then I pull my sheets off and fit them onto the top bunk. Isabelle and Maya are giggling loudly as they tape pictures of frogs onto the wall next to their bed. I was the one who suggested they bring frog decorations. I happen to hate frogs. For me, they're almost as bad as spiders—maybe one notch up.

I take a calming breath, climb down the ladder, and walk over to join them. I sit on the bottom mattress and clip on a few of Maya's barrettes, but they keep slipping out of my short, silky hair.

Dina gives us a walking tour of Camp Sunnytree. It's optional for the returning campers, but we all come along. I stop for a moment to adjust the cinchy elastic on my sandals. When I catch up, I notice that Maya and Isabelle have linked their elbows. They're singing this song about being made out of glue and sticking together.

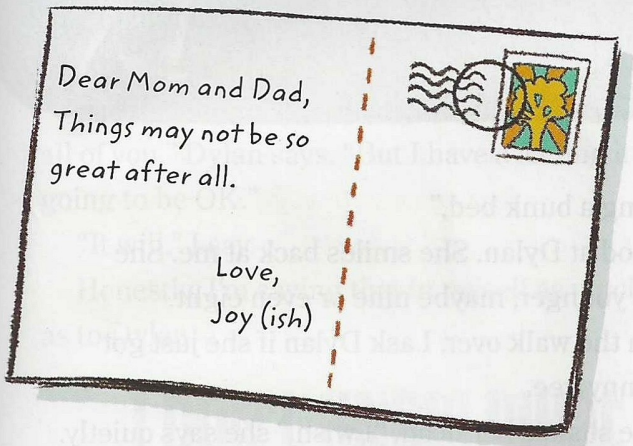
"What are you singing?" I ask.

"Just something I heard on the drive up," Isabelle says.

I consider singing her "Make New Friends but Keep the Old." Instead I stoop over and cinch my other shoe tighter.

At dinner, I sit across from Maya and Isabelle, who don't stop talking the entire time. They realize with delight that both of their middle names are Anne, and they both love eating peanut butter on a spoon. When the director makes her welcome speech, they whistle instead of clap. At the campfire, they start everyone in a round of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat." It's like they're the exact same person!

I've had enough. I leave the fire and wander over to the camp store. That's where they sell things like jelly beans, conditioner, and sweatshirts. They also have a little post office for buying stamps and mailing letters. I sit on the hard wooden bench and scribble onto a postcard:



I hand it to the guy working there and head slowly back to the campfire. Two weeks. Two whole weeks. Two whole lousy weeks at Camp Sunnytree, where my best friends like each other more than they like me.

At seven the next morning, I hear the bugle playing "Reveille." I sit up too quickly and whack my head on the ceiling. I see a spider scurrying across the rafters. *Breathe . . . breathe . . . breathe.* That's what Maya used to tell me last year. Whenever I was in panic mode, she'd hold

my hand and coax me through my spider phobia.

I glance across the cabin. Most girls are rubbing their eyes, pushing their hair out of their faces. But Maya and Isabelle's bunk beds are empty.

The toilet flushes, rattling the water bottle on the shelf next to my bed.

"Where are Maya and Isabelle?" I ask the counselor as she steps out of the bathroom.

"Polar bear swim," Dina says.

Of course. They both would love plunging into the chilly lake water at seven in the morning. I'm more of a sunny afternoon swimmer. Even so, I wish they'd invited me along.

Things aren't much better at breakfast. Maya and Isabelle have twisted their wet hair back with matching ladybug barrettes. They both say hi to me, and then lean over their pancakes, eating as quickly as possible.

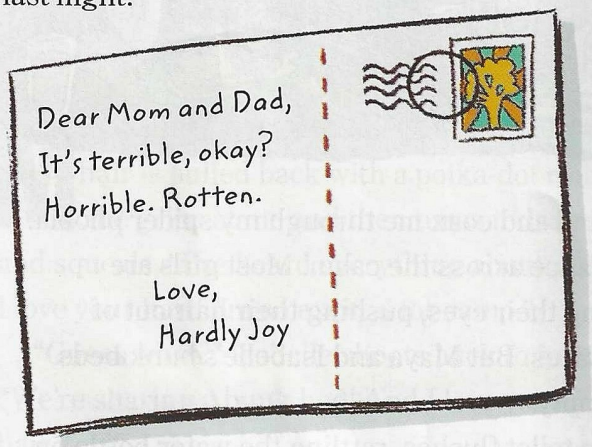
"We're going frogging this morning," Isabelle explains. "The crew leaves right after breakfast."

"Want to come?" Maya adds. "I'm sure we can sign you up."

My stomach flips. I don't want to go frogging. But is it weird to wish they'd signed me up with them anyway?

I generally try to be happy. I generally try to have a positive attitude. But all of a sudden, I feel like I'm going to cry. I hop up from the table, mumble that I forgot something, and run to the camp store.

"Can I buy a postcard?" I ask the guy working there. At least it's not the same person as last night.



I'm heading back to the dining hall to register for morning activities when I hear my counselor calling, "Hey, Joy!"

I trip over a tree root and fall onto the moss.

"Are you OK?"

It seems like a big question, much bigger than I can answer right now. So I wipe the dirt off my knees and say, "I guess."

"I'm glad I found you. Listen, this is Dylan."

I was so caught up in feeling bad that I hadn't even noticed the small, pale-haired girl standing behind Dina. She waves shyly at me and then stares at the ground.

"Dylan is moving into Willows this morning," Dina continues. "I'm wondering if you could walk her down and show her around. You two will be

sharing a bunk bed."

I nod at Dylan. She smiles back at me. She looks younger, maybe nine or even eight.

On the walk over, I ask Dylan if she just got to Sunnytree.

She shakes her head. "I wish," she says quietly. "No, I actually wish I never came to camp in the first place."

"What do you mean?"

Dylan explains how she got off the camp bus yesterday only to be told she was bunking in Oaks, the cabin for nine-year-old boys. It turns out the camp staff thought, because of her name, that she was a boy. They were going to move her over to Sunflowers, except it was full to capacity. So she spent the night in the infirmary bed until they could sort things out.

"That's terrible," I say. "Was the nurse there, at least?"

"Yeah," Dylan says, "but so were the cabinets of shots and the smell of disinfectant and those mustard-yellow barf basins that make me feel queasy just looking at them. Last night wasn't exactly paradise for me."

I have to laugh.

"I can't believe they thought you were a boy," I say.

"People always assume that," she says.

"Just like how everyone thinks I should be happy," I tell her, "because my name is Joy."

"Your parents should have named you Miserable," Dylan offers, smiling. "Then everyone would be surprised because you're so nice."

When I hear Dylan tell me I'm nice, I want to hug her. I touch her arm. "I'm glad you're moving into Willows."

"I was nervous because I'm a year younger than all of you," Dylan says. "But I have a feeling it's going to be OK."

"It will," I say.

Honestly, I'm saying that to myself as much as to Dylan.

our bunk bed, we have to take three cards back into our hands.

As I hike up to the office, I think about the past few days. Parts have been rocky (Isabelle and Maya are always together and often forget to include me) and parts have been good (Dylan, the jelly beans at the camp store, a great new climbing wall).

"Hello?" I ask, picking up the phone on the director's desk.

"Are you OK?" Mom asks. I'm on speakerphone so that I can talk to both of them.

"We got your postcard in the mail today," Dad says. "It sounds like things aren't going too well."

I lean back in the chair and rub my forehead. I was definitely upset when I wrote them that last postcard.

"It's getting better," I say. "I made a new friend this week."

My parents and I talk for a few minutes, and I reassure them that I'll call if things get bad again.

I'm just walking back to Willows when I see Dina sitting on the front steps of the cabin, talking

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY. MAYA AND ISABELLE HAVEN'T BEEN THE MOST LOYAL FRIENDS TO ME. AND NOW THEY BOTH NEED ME?

Two days later, Dina comes into Willows during rest time. "Joy," she says, "your parents are on the phone in the camp office."

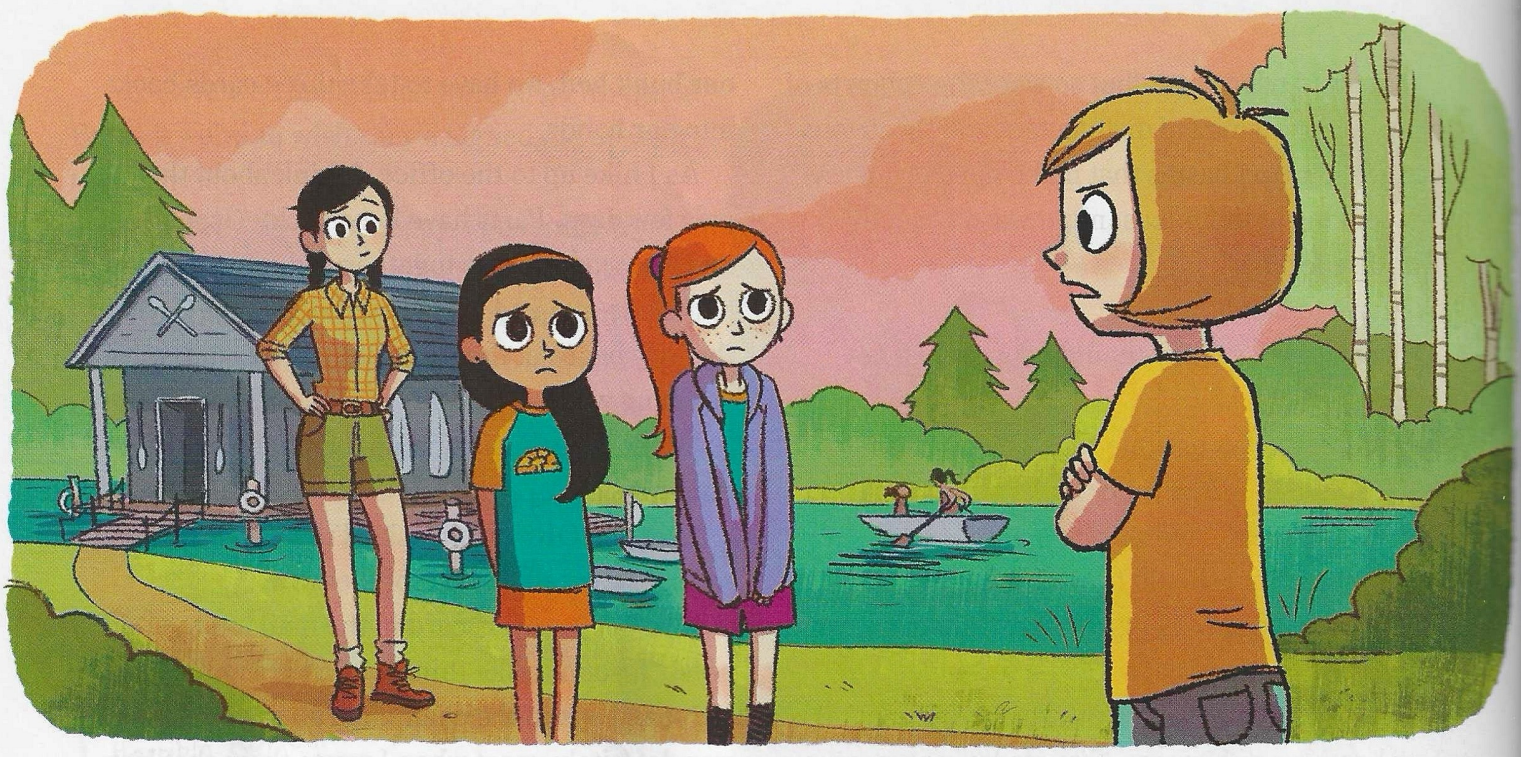
I look up from the bottom bunk, where Dylan and I had been sitting cross-legged (to avoid spiders) and playing cards (Spit). We have this silly rule that whenever the toilet flushes and rattles

to Isabelle. As I get closer, I notice that Isabelle is crying.

"I'm so glad you're here," Dina says to me.

"What's going on?" I ask.

"It's Isabelle and Maya," Dina says. "They've gotten into an argument. Maya is inside and she's pretty upset, too. They're both insisting that they



want to talk to you. Can you help us out?"

I don't know what to say. Maya and Isabelle haven't been the most loyal friends to me. And now they both need me?

"I guess," I say.

"Hang on," Dina says. "I'll grab Maya."

Once Dina goes inside, Isabelle wipes her eyes. "I'm so sorry. I haven't exactly been there for you. I was just really excited about camp, and meeting Maya…"

I decide not to say anything. I just listen and nod.

A moment later, Maya appears on the front porch. Dina takes Isabelle inside to wash her face. Maya sits next to me and says almost the same thing. "I'm really sorry, Joy. I haven't been a great friend these past few days."

I don't respond to Maya either. I have something I want to say, but I can't quite figure out what it is.

Dina closes the screen door and then suggests we all walk to the waterfront. At first, everyone's quiet, but Dina gets them talking. It turns out Isabelle was mad because Maya lost one of her hair feathers. Maya is mad because Isabelle didn't wait for her after the swim test. By the time we arrive at the boathouse, they're both laughing and things are returning to normal.

Except they're not.

Because I've finally figured out what I want to tell them.

"So, everything's good?" Dina asks. "How about we put on some life preservers and take out a canoe?"

Maya and Isabelle nod excitedly, but I shake my head.

"I can't," I say.

Everyone stops and stares at me.

"I left Dylan in the middle of a card game, and I'm not about to ditch her. Not like how you guys ditched me. Because it's not OK. Actually, it hurts."

Then I turn and walk straight up to Willows without turning around once.

The next morning, we're out on the archery field when it starts to rain. The storm comes out of nowhere. Everyone is hurriedly putting equipment away, but then the lightning hits. I throw down my bow and bolt back to Willows. I climb up the ladder and crawl under my covers. I'm trembling like crazy. A few minutes later, I hear the cabin door squeak open. It's Dylan, followed by Maya and Isabelle. The next thing I know, they're all climbing to the top bunk and piling onto my bed with me.

"Hey, Joy," Dylan says. "I didn't know you were scared of lightning. Isabelle and Maya made us run back here."

"Are you OK?" Isabelle asks.

Maya rubs my back. "Remember to breathe," she says. "Just like with spiders."

I sit up. At least I'm careful not to bonk my head. "Thanks a lot for bringing up spiders at a time like this!"

Maya shrugs. "Can I at least say I'm sorry again?"

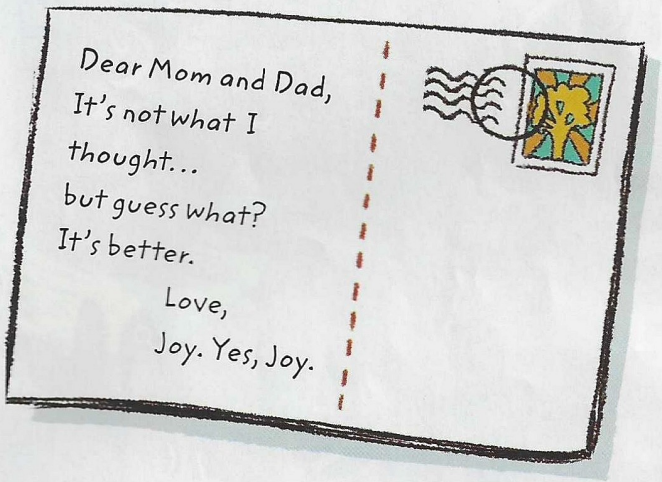
"Me too," Isabelle chimes in.

The three of us give each other a group hug, and then we grab Dylan and pull her in.

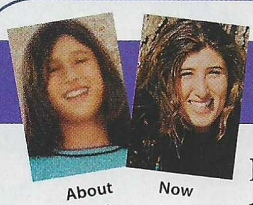
"The sun's coming out," Dylan says. "Want to go sign up for the climbing wall?"

"We have to swing by the camp store first," I say. "I need to buy a stamp."

As my friends climb down the ladder and pull on their sneakers, I grab a blank postcard off my shelf.



Meet the Author



Carolyn Mackler

During the summer after high school, I was a camp counselor for a cabin of ten-year-old girls. Whenever a friendship drama came up, we went on the front porch of the cabin to talk together. It was a great place to sort out the friend troubles, plus there was a beautiful view of the lake!

AG's Puzzle Page
Ocean Fun
Five fish have gotten separated from this school on the right. Can you find each lost fish in the coral reef?

Turn to page 56 for the answers.

Posters: Carefully cut along the dotted lines to remove your posters.

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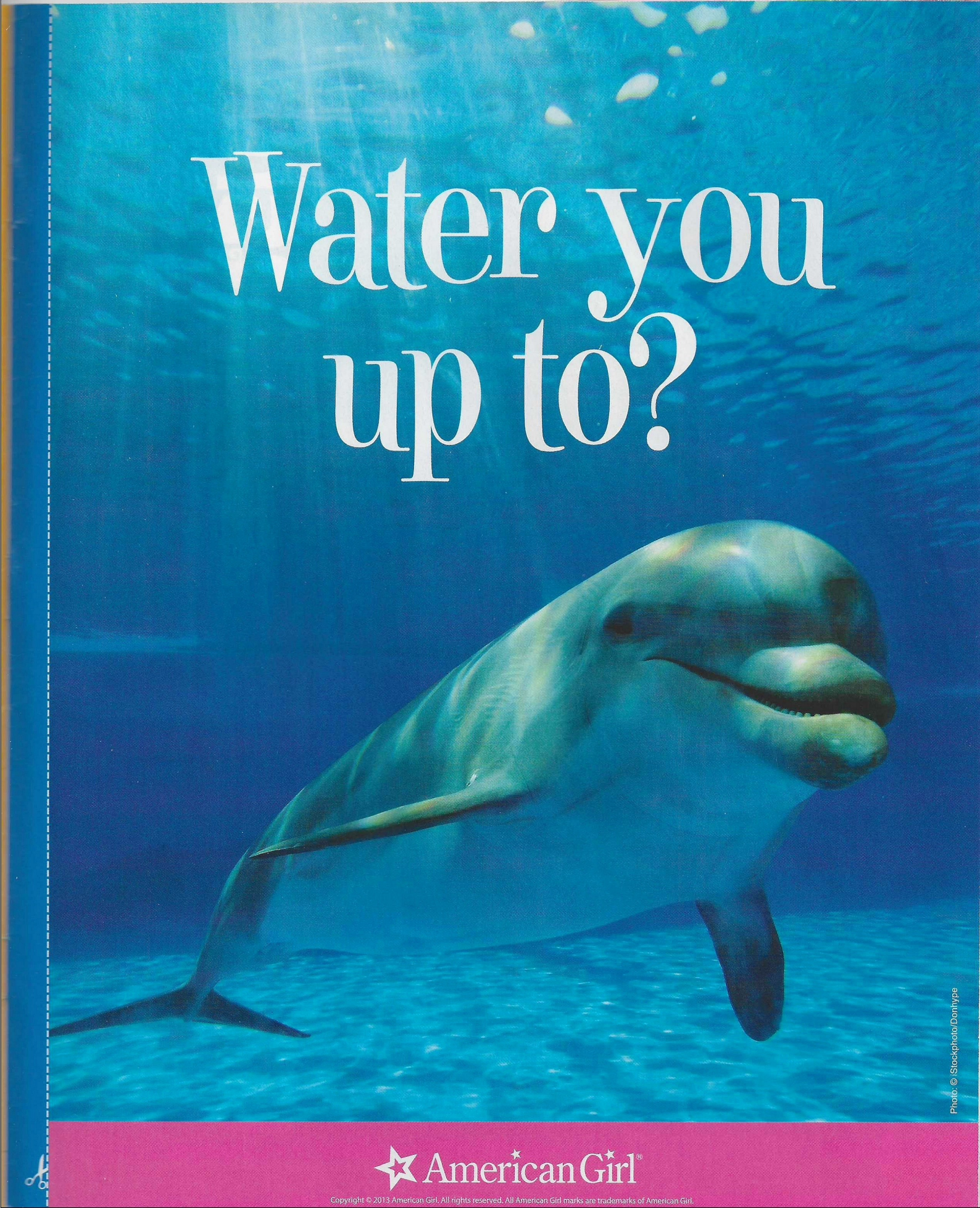

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Just a PINCH of fun

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HELP!

Dear *American Girl,*

During thunderstorms, I get so scared that I have to go sleep with my parents. They're tired of it, and I'm embarrassed. Help me.

Fraidy Cat

Ask a parent to help you make a "storm plan." It can include whatever helps you—a parent coming to check on you, turning on a small light during a storm, deep breathing, or remembering storm facts. (Did you know that thunder is simply the sound of hot air expanding and vibrating?) With a plan, your fears can blow away like the storm clouds.

Dear *American Girl,*

I got long layers cut in my hair. It looks great! But my old hairdos—mostly braids—don't work now. The hair sticks out!

can't do my hair

Your new layers are giving you a chance to try some new styles. Instead of braids, try rolling or twisting your hair and pinning it with bobby pins. Headbands also work well with layered cuts. One sure way to find styles is to look for pictures of someone with a cut like yours and try the styles she wears. Don't be afraid to ask for an extra hand if you need it.

★

Dear *American Girl,*

My friend is always fighting with her brother. It makes me feel awful, and I try to break it up, but they keep on arguing.

Hopeless

One thing is for sure—this is not your problem to solve. It's best to keep out of all arguments between members of another family. But you can talk to your friend. Try: "It stresses me out when you fight with your brother. Can we get your parents to help solve this, or even just hang at my house?" When your friend knows how you feel, she can work on ending the fights.

★

Dear *American Girl,*

My dog died recently. I've been doing a lot of fun stuff like swimming and drama, but that makes me worry I'll forget her.

Dog Girl

You'll never forget a pet you loved. And over time, sad feelings about your pet will change to treasured memories. It's OK for you to do fun things and enjoy your life—that's not disrespectful of your dog at all, and it doesn't change how you felt about her. In fact, keeping busy is often a good way to help yourself feel less sad when something like this happens. Enjoy your summer.

★

Illustrations Laura Cornell

MORE HELP!

Dear *American Girl,*

I just won the lead role in a musical. Yay! The problem is that the performance is on the same three days as my choir's trip to Chicago. My choir friend needs me on the trip, but the musical needs me onstage.

I need advice

Yikes—you're going to have to let down a group that's important to you. The rule in most situations like this is to keep whichever promise you made first. (That goes for parties and plans with friends, too.) Talk to a parent or director to make sure that you're making the right decision, and try to avoid conflicts like this. They're never easy.

★

Dear *American Girl,*

My desk is SO MESSY. I clean it, and a week later it's trashed again. I cannot keep it straight.

not organized

It's not fun, but the best way to fix this problem is to do a little work every day. Clean up art supplies after you use them. File papers in storage boxes or drawers. Throw away unneeded things right away, instead of dumping them on your desk to deal with later. That way, your mess won't get out of control.

★

Dear *American Girl,*

Whatever I do, my brother does better. He runs better than I do. He plays the drums better. I'm good at talking to adults, but he's even better! How can I like myself compared to THAT?

Jealous

There's one thing that your brother can never do better than you can, and that's to *be you.* It might sound cheesy, but it is completely true. You're a girl who can run and drum and talk to adults, a girl who cares about being the best person she can be. There's no point in comparing yourself to anyone else because you're already a perfect you. And don't you forget it.

★

Dear *American Girl,*

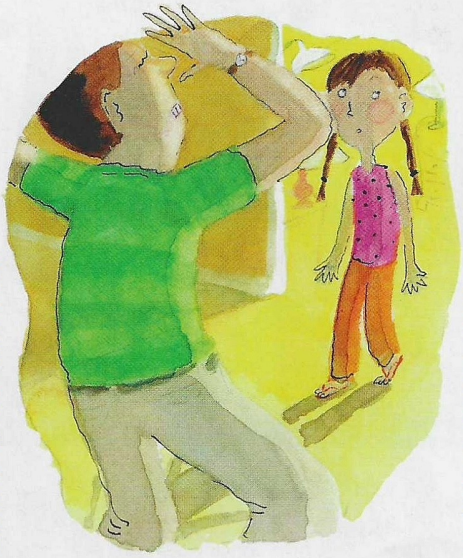
My parents think I text too much. They want me to know the skill of calling, but I already know how. How can I make it work with them?

Text or Call Help

Texting is a great way to stay in touch, but you've got to be able to communicate without a keypad. Show your parents you can by having conversations, ordering for yourself in restaurants, and making some phone calls. Your parents might just miss seeing your eyes—they'd probably feel better if you'd put your phone down sometimes.

★

even MORE HELP!



Dear *American Girl,*

My best friend's parents split up a year ago. She's having trouble going between houses and cries all the time. I don't want to be annoyed, but I am. She's had a year to get used to it.

Help

It's hard to watch a friend go through something tough. And you're right—a year is a long time to feel sad. But nobody gets to decide how long is long enough for someone else to feel a certain way. Help your friend make the best of her time at each house by brainstorming ideas for her rooms, asking her to hang out, or even just getting in touch when she's having a hard time. If she's not better soon, talk to a trusted adult.

★

Dear *American Girl,*

I have a bad habit of leaving the lights on when I leave my room. I'm not doing it on purpose! But my dad says that if I don't stop, he'll put a timer on the light in my room, which I wouldn't like.

lights on

You are a girl who just needs a little reminder. Make yourself a funny sign ("Here's a bright idea—turn off the lights!") and hang it next to your bedroom door. That will help you to build a lights-out routine for whenever you leave a room. Soon, you might even accidentally turn out the lights on your dad!

★

Dear *American Girl,*

A girl at school always accuses my friend and me of leaving her out when we play a game that she doesn't like or don't do whatever she wants. She's making us seem like bullies, but we're not!

Don't know what to do

This is tricky. You do need to make sure that you're not picking certain games just to leave this girl out. But you're right that it's not fair to make others feel bad just to get your own way. Next time she accuses you, try this: "We're taking turns so that it feels fair for everyone. You can play this game with us today, and then you can pick a different game for us all to play tomorrow." That way, you have included her but not done only what she wants. Good luck!

★

Advice from You

"I have advice for girls who have tangled hair. Work conditioner through the ends of your hair, and then comb through your conditioned hair using your fingers or a comb. Rinse well, and presto! Non-tangled hair.

Vivian H.
Age 11, Alabama

Need advice? Got advice? Write:
Help!
***American Girl* magazine**
8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562

Behind the Scenes

This issue was packed with sun, smiles, and summer fun.

Even though it was a very hot day, we had a great time at the "Sunny Celebration" shoot.

A perfect picnic

Yum!

Some girls drew themselves wearing crazy hairstyles for our contest. Here are a couple that made us grin.

Karly S., age 10, California

Sara Z., age 11, Washington

In Help!, our tip for remembering to turn off lights is to make a sign. Here's how we remember the key to our craft room.

AG's Puzzle Page answers:

For Speak Up!, most readers said they'd love to see pink clouds, but it might be cool to see **rainbow** or **zebra-striped** clouds, too!

Take a color personality quiz at **americangirl.com/playmagazine**

Illustrations: Paige Pooler Photo: Steven Talley

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Coming up in the September/October issue of *American Girl* magazine

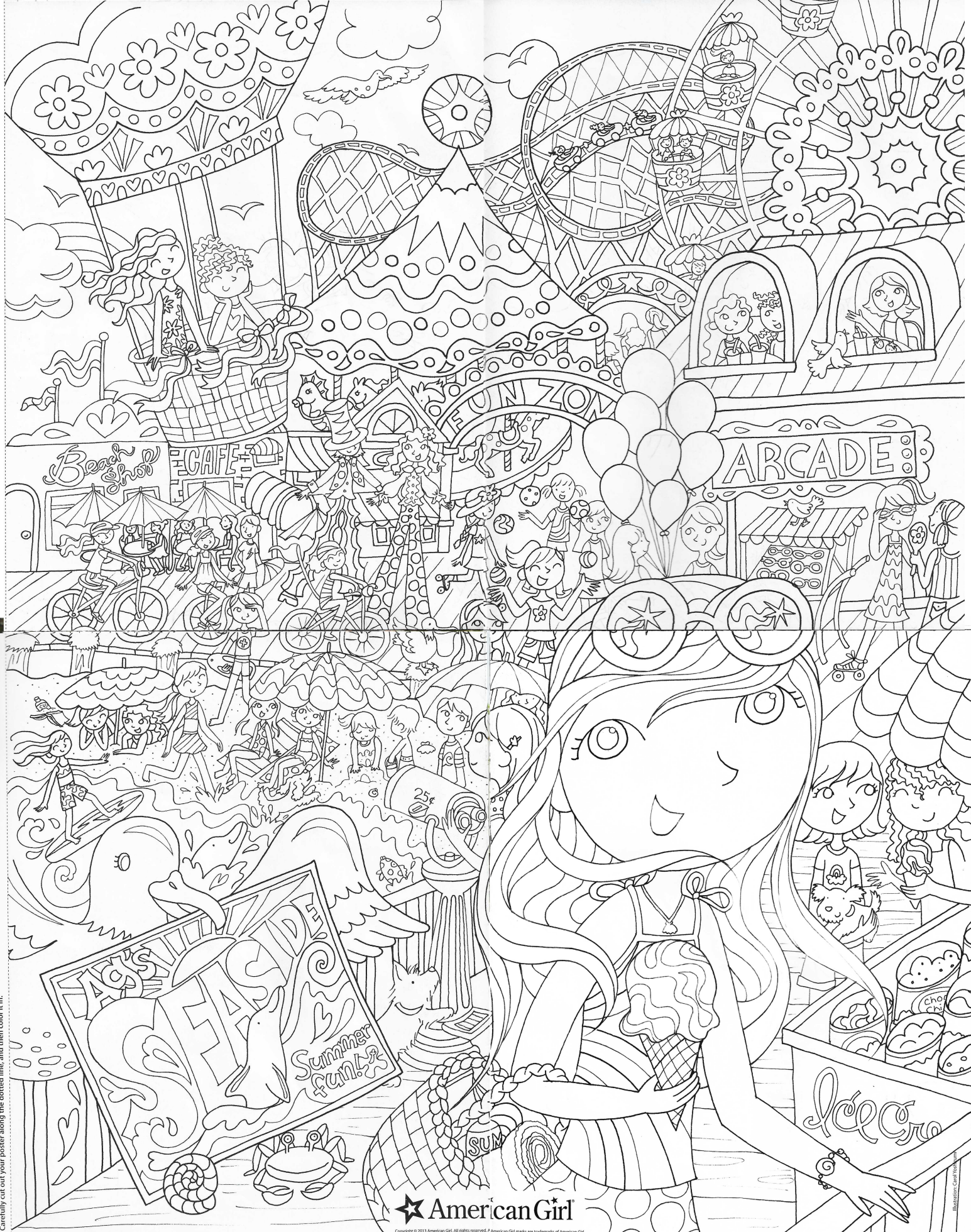
Fall Fun
Dress up your pumpkins with our cute decorating ideas.

Red Delicious
You'll love our yummy apple recipes.

Boo-tiful Art
See spooky self-portraits made by girls like you.

"Psst..."
Find out how readers deal with gossip and rumors.

For more fun and games, go to americangirl.com/playmagazine



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American Girl

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